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NOTES AND LITERATURE.

ANTHROPOLOGY.

The Seri Indians.¹— It is especially fortunate that Seriland should have been explored by an ethnologist eminently fitted to describe the physiographic features of that little-known region. Professor McGee's memoir upon "The Seri Indians" is furnished with a new topographic map, a detailed description of the country and of its fauna and flora, as well as a succinct account of the arts and social institutions of the natives.

After presenting a comprehensive summary of Seri history, the author deals with the somatic characters of the people. The Seri differ from other Amerinds in their physiological and physical characters as strikingly as in their demotic. They are remarkable especially for their fleetness of foot to an extent that we should regard as quite incredible were it made known to us merely by travelers' tales.

The description of Seri demotic characters more nearly approaches completeness in the chapters devoted to Symbolism and Decoration, Industries and Industrial Products, and Social Organization. Personal decoration is confined almost entirely to facial painting, and that is a feminine prerogative. In discussing the "significance of decoration" Professor McGee outlines a scheme of progressive development from what he terms automacy to autonomy that is intricate but interesting. Industrial development is surprisingly low among the Seri. The "industrial use of stone is fortuitous and temporary." The author offers a new classification of primitive stone art based upon his observations among the Seri. The protolithic stage is that in which the stones are not shaped to conform to an established pattern; the technolithic, wherein the stones are fractured or otherwise shaped. Seri marriage customs are instructive to the student of social organization; they exhibit an almost unique moral test, and show a deep-seated interest in the maintenance of the tribal autonomy. The Seri are polygenous, apparently because of the reduction in the number of warriors in recent years.

¹ *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 1895-96. Washington, D. C., 1898 (distributed 1901). 344 pp., map and plates.

In addition to the store of geographic knowledge this memoir is a positive contribution to ethnologic science of the highest value. It establishes a new linguistic stock (Serian), it affords illustrations of priscan phases of culture of extreme rarity, and the author advances many suggestions of theoretic interest.

FRANK RUSSELL.

ZOOLOGY.

Schmeil's Zoölogy.¹ — This work was originally prepared for students in German Gymnasia and "Realschulen," and has as its primary object a disciplinary use of the facts of zoölogy. It tells certain facts, it leads the student to infer other facts and reasons by numerous and carefully worded questions. It differs from the old-time zoölogies, which merely gave a description of selected animals, by some very important features. It takes representative forms and describes them from an œcological standpoint; showing how they are adapted to their environment, and how they are fitted to a certain kind of life. Then follow shorter descriptions of allied forms. There is a minimum of structural details throughout, but the biological side, so interesting to young students, is everywhere emphasized. We would advise that all secondary schools teaching zoölogy have a copy of this work in the reference library; its price and its unnecessarily large size forbid its use with us as a class-room text.

K.

Herrick's Home Life of Wild Birds. — The subtitle of Professor Herrick's book,² if it is understood that only the home life of birds is to be studied and photographed by the new method, will serve as a guide to the nature of this very valuable addition to the list of books dealing with bird life. Professor Herrick has, by the help of the strong parental instinct in birds, overcome the difficulties with which the photography of birds in the wild state has hitherto been attended. Instead of trusting to mechanical devices for arranging

¹ Schmeil, Otto. *Text-Book of Zoölogy*, treated from a biological standpoint, translated from the German by Rudolf Rosenstock, M.A., edited by J. F. Cunningham, M.A. London, Adam and Charles Black, 1901. xvi + 493 pp.

² Herrick, Francis Hobart. *The Home Life of Wild Birds*. A New Method of the Study and Photography of Birds. With 141 original illustrations from nature by the author. New York and London, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1901. 148 pp.